

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 0269

E.O. 11652: CGDS-1
TAGS: MPOL NL
SUBJECT: DUTCH DEFENSE POLICY

1. ON THE OCCASION OF CALL BY EUR/NE DIRECTOR FUNSETH, MOD SECRETARY GENERAL PEIJNENBURG SOUNDED A GENERALLY UPBEAT NOTE ABOUT FUTURE OF DUTCH DEFENSE. HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE POSITIVE PASSAGES ON NATO IN JANUARY 16 GOVERNMENT STATE TO PARLIAMENT (SEPTTEL) AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THREE PERCENT GOAL WOULD BE WITHIN REACH.

2. PEIJNENBURG CITED FORTHCOMING REPLACEMENT OF NEPTUNE ASW AIRCRAFT AND SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT ORION WOULD BE ONLY LOGICAL CHOICE, GIVEN AVAILABILITY AND PRICE. HE THOUGHT THE F-16 PROGRAM WAS MOVING WELL AND WENT ON TO MENTION INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF CO-PRODUCTION AND TW-WAY STREET.

3. ON NUCLEAR ISSUES, PEIJNENBURG MENTIONED THAT NEW DUTCH DEFENSE MINISTER KRUISINGA WAS LIKELY TO FOLLOW CAUTIOUS APPROACH OF HIS PREDECESSOR STEMERDINK. HE SAID THAT KRUISINGA, A MEDICAL DOCTOR, WAS ACUTELY AWARE OF EFFECTS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, LEAVING THE IMPRESSION KRUISINGA MIGHT BE OPPOSED TO ER/RB WEAPON. HE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOICE CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT PRESS STORIES THAT THE US MIGHT BE CONSULTING
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ON SALT WITH DIRECTORATE OF LARGER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. HE WARNED THAT SUCH AN APPROACH, IF TRUE, WOULD STRENGTHEN LATENT TENDENCIES IN THE NETHERLANDS TO SLACKEN DEFENSE EFFETS, ON THE THEORY THAT THE CONTRIBUTION OF SMALL COUNTRIES WOULD MAKE NO MATERIAL DIFFERENCE.

4. PEIJNENBURG SPOKE WITH EVIDENT PRIDE ABOUT THE RECENT

MATERIAL ACQUISITION PROGRAM, MENTIONING THE FRIGATE PROGRAM FOR THE DUTCH NAVY. HE ALSO SAID THE NETHERLANDS WOULD SEEK TO REPLACE TWO OUT OF ITS CURRENT SIX SUBMARINES AND UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE THAT THENETHERLANDS, AS AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY, MAINTAIN A BALANCED NAVY.

5. WITH RESPECT TO THE DESIRE OF DEFENSE MINISTER KRUISINGA TO VISIT WASHINGTON, PEIJNENBURG THOUGHT APRIL WOULD BE A GOOD TIME.

MCCLOSKEY

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